



Clarion
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The Old Testament and archaeology

Ur of the Chaldeans

What kind of city did Abraham live in when God called him from Ur of the Chaldeans (cf. Gen. 11:31; Acts 7:2-4)? What did Abraham leave behind? Questions like these are worth considering because popular notions of those distant "primitive" times are often inaccurate and can therefore hinder a full appreciation of the Biblical account.

Ur of the Chaldeans is generally identified with modern Tell Muqayyar in southern Iraq, about 160 km (as the bird flies) northwest of the modern city of Basra, well-known from the current Iraq-Iran war. This site was chiefly excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley between 1922 and 1934. Interest in this city continues as the publication of the fourth edition of Woolley's account of the dig (*Ur "of the Chaldees,"* 1982) attests. On the basis of archaeological finds, which include thousands of inscribed clay tablets from the period of Abraham, a picture of Ur in his day can be reconstructed.

Ur was a prosperous bustling metropolis, home of the Sumerian kings, which along with its immediate environs had a population of about 250,000. This wealthy trading and manufacturing centre was renowned for its textile industry where wool and flax from the nearby fertile plains were woven into different types of cloth and shipped abroad. Other exports included grain, dates, fish and skins or leather. Imports from as far away as Asia Minor and southern India made their way into Ur by caravan and boat and included precious metals, ivory and pearls; spices, exotic food, and fruit trees; lumber and aromatic woods. Good communications and an effective banking system helped make all this possible. Enough evidence exists to suggest that Abraham's Ur also had skilled engineers, architects, knowledgeable farmers and artisans, as well as celebrated jewellers. The achievements of the latter graced many a citizen. Indeed, royal graves of Ur from 500 years prior to Abraham's time have yielded a stunning array of art objects of gold and precious stones.

The sophistication of Ur is also evidenced by the level of medical expertise available to its citizens. The Sumerians knew how to isolate quite a variety of chemicals and were aware, for example, that acetylsalicylic acid ("aspirin") reduced fever and pain. Medical prescriptions have been found and it may be assumed that they had considerable therapeutic effect. Indeed, it has been suggested that these inscriptions, once fully understood, may prove of some practical value to modern research!

Life was quite comfortable in Ur, especially for the wealthy and the prosperous middle class. A typical two-storey house of the well-to-do would be constructed of bricks and plastered and whitewashed both inside and out. It would be built around an open court, with central drain, and contain about twelve rooms, including a reception room, kitchen, one or two lavatories (which in key respects were quite similar to their modern Arab counterparts) and servants' quarters. Low tables, high-backed chairs and beds with wooden frames served as furniture. Reed mats, skin rugs and woolen hangings covered the

floors and walls. Although Scripture does not specifically inform us about the material circumstances of Terah and Abraham in Ur, there seems to be no compelling reason to dispute the old idea that they were wealthy (cf., e.g., Gen. 12:5) and thus shared in one way or other in the comforts of this civilization.

Dominating the city, both physically and spiritually, was the temple-tower or ziggurat which rose in three stages to one hundred and fifty feet above the streets. It can still be seen today in a partially restored state. At the base of this edifice were two temples, the vast market place, the temple library and school. Here students learned the basics, writing, reading and arithmetic, before specializing in accounting and banking, mathematics and astronomy, botany, medicine or geology, or in the religious texts. On the top of the ziggurat was a small temple built entirely of blue enameled bricks and dedicated to the moon-god Nanna which was the principal deity of Ur. A special temple workshop would have made the image of such a god and when ready the image underwent a ritual so that its mouth was "opened" and it was considered endowed with life. For all practical purposes, such an image was treated as a living person and was served and surrounded by priests, priestesses, musicians, eunuchs and temple slaves. Besides their chief city god, the people of Ur worshipped hundreds and even thousands of other gods. Their religion was polytheism of the grossest type, with the licentiousness and temple prostitution that inevitably accompanied it.

And so although Ur was a great city, with a tremendous culture, it was also a city in deep spiritual darkness. This did not leave Abraham untouched. When the covenant was renewed at Shechem, Joshua reminded Israel: "Your fathers lived of old beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods." According to Jewish tradition, Terah also bought and sold idols.

From this pagan city and environment, God called Abraham. The grace of God! In a city full of idols, He revealed Himself to Abraham as the true and living God. He called Abraham out in order to make of him a great nation through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:2, 3). The grace of God! He also gave Abraham the faith he needed to leave the "good" life of Ur and to become a stranger in a land not his own. Abraham left a great city, but in faith he saw a far better one. The words of Hebrews 11:9-10 come to mind. "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." With this vision of faith, Abraham was far richer than those who only identified themselves and their well-being with the pagan metropolis of Ur and all its glories. He was rich toward God (cf. Luke 12:21). Therein lies also a message for us today.

C. VAN DAM

The “Volendam” congregation¹

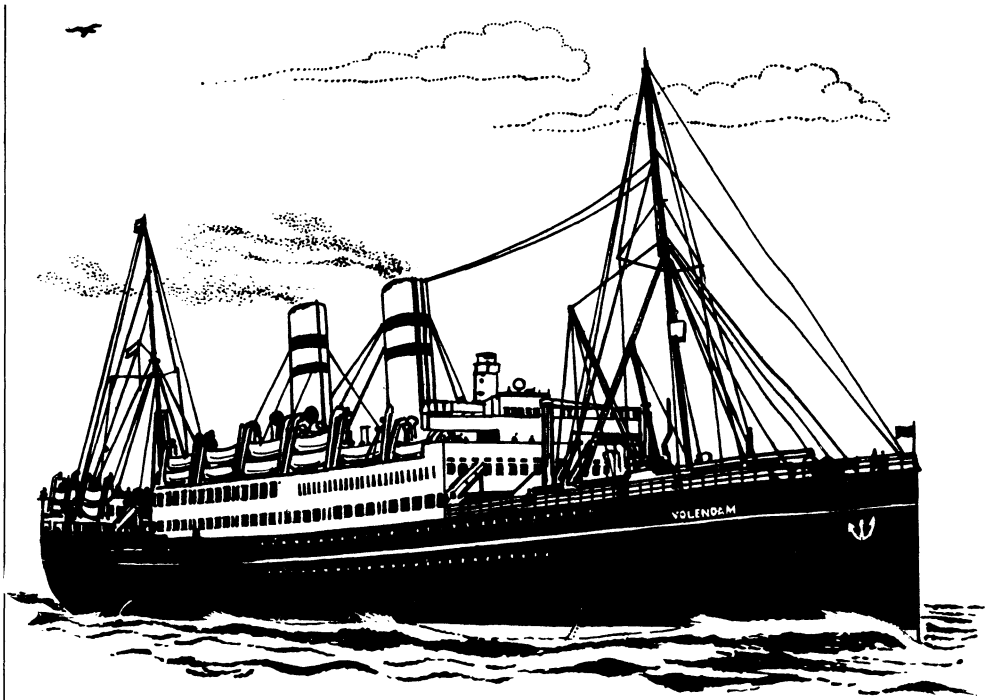
On May 16, 1950, the steamship “Volendam” left the harbour of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, to arrive at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, on May 25, 1950.

At least this is what I can ascertain from an interesting collection of letters, recently donated to the Theological College by sister C. Walinga in Hamilton. When I read these letters, I was so fascinated that I decided to write a note in *Clarion* in order to stimulate other “old timers” to save information valuable for the history of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

The name “Volendam congregation” has not been invented by me, but is used as addressee of one of the twelve letters that make up this collection. Apparently several families, that in the Netherlands had belonged to the Reformed Churches still known as “Liberated” (*Vrijgemaakt*), found one another on the large ship that would bring them to their new country. They were strengthened in their faith by their mutual desire to serve God and to build His church on the American continent. A rather strong bond developed in regular public devotions on board the ship and when they arrived in the harbour of Halifax, they made the commitment to stay in contact with one another by means of a chain of letters. The collection of twelve letters is the result of this commitment. Time and again we notice that the recipients had looked forward to receiving the collection and to adding their own experiences.

Even the last letter in the collection — or the last link in the chain — testifies to these strong ties: “We experience time and again that the ‘Volendam’ bond is still strong. Of course, the boat did not bring this about, but the communion of saints experienced there already. It gave us strength and help in our special circumstances and put more clearly and sharply before our eyes our task and duty in this vast country.”

Some of the interesting aspects of the collection are that the families became dispersed throughout Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia and that they describe their first experiences in their new environment. Most important of all, these letters bring us to the very cradle of the Canadian Reformed Churches and gives



us an insight into what motivated these Dutch immigrants to establish their independent church life.

The organization of the letter chain as such had its difficulties. Not all addresses in the new country were known when G. Schutten in Fort Frances, Ontario, wrote the first letter on July 2, 1950. And during the course of the correspondence some moved to another location and the links in the chain changed. Nevertheless, the collection reached the following families and places: D. van Leeuwen (Waldemar, ON), J.G. Feenstra (Fenwick, ON), C. Walinga (Newmarket, ON), P.v.d.Gaag (Mooretown, ON), P. Wildeboer and J. Poortinga (Orangeville, ON), K. Flokstra and H. Veldkamp (Lethbridge, AB), H. Schutten (Trail, BC), J.M. van Sydenborgh (Goderich, ON) and K. Sieders (Tottenham, ON). The last letter is written on Feb. 11, 1951, and the entire correspondence, therefore, took more than seven months.

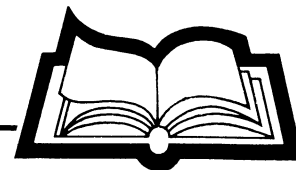
Sociologists and historians must have a heyday reading reports of new immigrants. We hear of disappointments at the

beginning. On their way to Lethbridge, Alberta, families had to stay for days in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in what I understand to have been a kind of Immigration Hall. Br. D. van Leeuwen in Waldemar, Ontario, writes that five weeks after arrival their wooden containers had not yet been delivered. The railway officers do not know where those containers might be. “It is terrible but we still have hope.”

Sometimes the promised position was not open anymore and Canadian farmers did not always pay the best wages. One brother writes that he began working for \$75 and almost no fringe benefits, at least not enough milk. Therefore, in the first months his family of seven did not have much luxury. But now he is very thankful. In November 1950 his “Volendam” contacts brought him to Orangeville and, lo and behold, the family has a much better house and a good boss: “milk enough and \$90.”

With a smile I read that at arrival brother Walinga himself had no house, but a

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“And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, He said to them, ‘Have you anything here to eat?’ ”

Luke 24:41

Easter Joy Sealed!

There are many anticipations of the moment of recognition which took place on the day of the resurrection, and yet none match the pointed description that Luke gives of this moment. Abraham felt something of it when he walked down the mountain of Moriah with his son Isaac. Jacob experienced something similar when he first saw Joseph after assuming him to be dead for so many years. And the same must have come over the women who received their sons from the dead through the prophets Elijah and Elisha. The event itself represents the completely unexpected, the reality of what is absolutely unbelievable. It is all too good to be true — so good that faith is as it were overwhelmed by joy.

But the joy of Easter morning transcends all the anticipations of the old dispensation. For here we discover more than bonds of blood at stake. Here the bond of faith speaks, that special bond which the Lord Jesus had established with His disciples. They are gripped with the joy of disbelief, a joy which has that sense of fear and doubt that what is experienced really cannot last, and does not correspond with every day reality. They see their Master, whom they loved and trusted. They had thought that He would never reappear, and yet there He stood speaking in their midst!

The Lord Jesus is fully aware of this euphoric joy, and now He takes pains to deepen and solidify it, so that rather than remaining a passing joy of the moment, it becomes the deepened joy of faith that the whole church may share. He does that by bringing the unexpected into full view and every day reality for all time. For He asks the most ordinary question in the world. He speaks as one that has been away, and now has returned to those with whom He is familiar, those among who He feels at home. “Do you have anything to eat?”

This most ordinary question seals the reality of the resurrection for the disciples. They suspected that the Lord Jesus was a spirit who could come and disappear at any moment. And indeed, the Lord Jesus was sudden and brief in His appearances! He never came to stay in a physical sense. For He had said, “What if you see the Son of man ascending to where He was before?” Yet He does wish to make clear that He comes as one who is at home here among His own, and as one who is among friends. Before leaving the earth, He assures us that He has not abandoned the earth or our flesh! Indeed, He has not only taken on, but also *perfected* that flesh.

This was the entirely unexpected for the disciples, and what brought bewilderment in all their joy. He was really there, and yet He was not there, for He was so different! He had passed through death. He stood on the other side of the

grave, and yet with them in the same room! So Jesus shows them that He is truly flesh and bones, made of the dust of the earth. He is not a spirit, but the same Person who appeared to them and walked among them for three years. Yet He is different! For the price of sin has been paid! The perishable has put on the imperishable and the mortal has put on immortality! A new day has dawned! And the Lord Jesus now prepares to take our flesh into heaven, so that the work completed on earth is also brought to heaven in order to be accepted and rewarded by the Father.

Here the disciples begin to learn the secret of satisfaction, and the wonder of the full renewal of our flesh through the mercy and grace of the Father. Here Easter joy is deepened and sealed. For the Lord Jesus prepares the disciples for His departure. Yet this preparation makes clear to them that He will remain with His Church to the end of the age. He appears and is present not as a stranger, but as a familiar guest. He comes as one who is known, and one who feels at home with His own! So He teaches His disciples and His Church that the bonds of fellowship are stronger than the distance that now separates the Head and the members.

In effect, Easter joy is deepened in the ascension and Pentecost. Easter is only the beginning of greater things! In the ensuing events Jesus proves that our flesh is in heaven, and also proves that His work on earth has been fully accepted by the Father. For He sends us His Spirit as a guarantee, through whom we know that heaven and earth are reconciled, and heavenly gifts have been poured in our hearts, redirecting our flesh to the service of the living God!

So the joy of the disciples becomes the earthly, robust, and lasting joy of faith and assurance. From total disbelief, they are brought to deepened understanding, the understanding of faith. Yet with all the depth the joy and the sense of the unbelievable remains. For in the resurrection of the Saviour, the church is confronted with what is absolutely unexpected, and what is entirely unfathomable! As Paul says, “What no eye has seen or ear heard or the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him, God has revealed to us through the Spirit!” I Corinthians 2:9.

And with all the depth that faith may have, it must never lose this sense of amazement and wonder at what is totally unexpected, and absolutely unbelievable. He is risen! It still is too good to be true! Yet by the Spirit we may be sure it is true, and may carry this knowledge with us in lasting joy and expectant hope every day!

J. DE JONG

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relative "had a large shed" ("een groot hok"). The carpenter Walinga and his wife changed it into a real home. Moreover, he earned good weekly wages, "so that also in this respect we are richly blessed by the good hand of our God." I will think of those words next time when I drive past Walinga's plant on the road between Guelph and Fergus where children and grandchildren and many other Canadian Reformed families now find full employment. We have indeed been richly blessed and God has been good to us. It struck me that the tendency of all letters is one of great thankfulness for material blessings and that no homesickness is noticeable at all.

The most important aspect, however, of the correspondence is the deep concern for the upbuilding of the church. Immediately in the first letter br. G. Schutten writes from Fort Frances that he is content with his situation.

"There is only one big but: THE CHURCH. We do not have church life here and, as far as we know, there are no other Reformed people living here. My wife and I read together two sermons on Sundays. The Lord willing, we hope to stay here no longer than necessary and to depart for a place where there is a church (we hopen op de duur op de kerk aan te kunnen trekken)."

On April 16, 1950, the Canadian Reformed Church of Lethbridge, Alberta, had already been instituted. In this collection of letters the importance of this congregation and of the work of its field man, br. Joh. de Haas, is evident. Lethbridge was the first "liberated" church and the experience of the brothers in Alberta was valuable to the brothers in Ontario. One of the brothers writes: "In my opinion Lethbridge is the feeding ground of our liberated churches in Canada, because here one can easily find a place for Dutch people." In January 1951 several families had already moved from Lethbridge to Edmonton in Alberta, New Westminster in British Columbia, and Georgetown in Ontario. Only twelve families remained, but in Spring 1951 fifteen new families would be placed in Lethbridge and surrounding area. "Thus we see that the Lord brings His church over all of Canada and that at His time He also leads the 'Volendam' liberated people to their destination."

In the meantime, the brothers and sisters in Ontario had to find their way. The correspondence is full of stories in connection with possible relations to the Christian Reformed Church and the Protestant Reformed Church.

In the first relation — that to the Christian Reformed Church — the "liberated" families in Ontario experienced the same obstacles as the brotherhood in Lethbridge

and it confirmed them in their conviction that they had to build up their separate church life. Br. Van Leeuwen writes that, although he goes regularly to the not yet officially instituted Christian Reformed Church and meets br. Wildeboer — another member of the "Volendam" community — church life is hopeless ("het kerkelijk leven is hier hopeloos"). People do not want to have anything to do with the liberated churches in the Netherlands. Even the proposal to read a sermon of one of our ministers once in a while was not accepted. He has a good boss, "but this is our priority: first seek the communion of saints either here or in Alberta. May God grant that we soon may find one another so that we together may work for the upbuilding of the local church to the glory of His Name."

Br. Walinga writes that every Sunday they are able to go to church and even to hear Dutch sermons once every fourteen days in the Christian Reformed Church. Their conscience could, however, not allow them to hand in their attestation: "wij hebben tot nog toe geen vrijmoedigheid kunnen vinden om onze attestaties af te geven." "Alas, here too one takes the synodical stand, namely, 'We do not want to talk about it.' Thus one does not justice to all those who have many and great concerns in respect to what recently happened in Christ's Church in the Netherlands during the years 1942-1950 We must consider the issues thoroughly and beseech the Lord our God seriously for light

and wisdom to find the right way to go. Would that it were possible that all of us could move closer to a certain place, e.g., Hamilton or Chatham! Then we probably could attain what has been realized in Lethbridge." Both the Christian Reformed Church and the Protestant Reformed Church differ too much from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. "Now that we obtain some idea about the map of Canada, we discover that we are not too far from one another, except those who ended up in Alberta or British Columbia. This chain letter will most probably be dominated by the church problem. Well, let us keep hold of this *chain* so that we do not become isolated. May God grant us all we need to serve Him according to His Word, also and especially with respect to His Church."

The letters mention that several "liberated" families and individual persons joined the Christian Reformed Church. Often they did not dare or want to broach the question of the Liberation in the Netherlands. Also members of the "Volendam" community first tried to find a true church at the place of their destination in the new country but they did not want to deny their heritage. Their first attempt was always to join a Christian Reformed or — as we will see next time — a Protestant Reformed Church. Only when this did not work out, they sought and found one another in the institution of what would become the Canadian Reformed Churches.

J. FABER

Clarion

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Geertsema
Co-Editors: K. Deddens, J. DeJong,
Cl. Starn, C. VanDam and W.W.J. VanOene

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
41 Amberly Boulevard
Ancaster, ON, Canada L9G 3R9

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

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A Canadian Reformed Church in the Maritimes (Nova Scotia)

On March 12, 1987 the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, NS became the 37th church in the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, when Classis Ontario-North of that date with thankfulness to the Lord decided to receive this church, and two of her delegates took their places as members of classis. With thier credentials this church presented herself as the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, NS, promising to abide by the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity and the Reformed Church Order.

Because the three elders of this church had been ordained according to Presbyterian church-polity, it was decided that they locally could remain in office for life (as long as they would not move to another congregation), and also are allowed to speak an edifying word in their church when no minister would be available.

These decisions were taken in accordance with the considerations of General Synod Burlington 1986 (Acts art. 85, III, B, Considerations 1, and IV, B, 1, 2), and thus also with the concurring advice of the deputies of the Regional Synod, who were invited and present for that purpose.

The decision of Classis was based on a report submitted by a committee appointed by the previous classis. This committee had visited the Church at Lower Sackville (very close to Halifax, NS) during a weekend, and had meetings with the Session (now consistory) and the congregation. The morning — and afternoon — worship services were attended, which were led by two of the three elders, each delivering a sermon prepared by them. The committee, consisting of brs. Rev. D. DeJong, elder H. Jager, and Rev. Cl. Stam, were happy to hear these good Reformed expositions of Scripture, one as confessed in Lord's Day 6 of the Heidelberg Catechism. About 40-60% of the songs were taken from the *Book of Praise*. Since the Genevan tunes are unfamiliar to congregation and organists/pianists, a time of 2 years was set for the transition.

It was a joyful event for this committee to experience the fellowship of the saints with this small congregation (about 20 members), and to notice their desire to be united in the true faith with the Canadian

Reformed Churches, and thus to receive our support in giving the Reformed testimony in the Maritimes.

This congregation hopes that not only from those who live in their surroundings people may be joined to this church, but that also from from the midst of us many (holidaying) visitors can be welcomed by them, and that there may be who even decide to settle there. Also holidaying ministers are very welcome, since (due to the high cost of travel) only four classical appointments per year are granted (when the Lord's Supper will be celebrated).

The address of the church is:

c/o Mr. Henry J. Moes

Comp. 88, Lively Road

RR 2, Lower Sackville, NS B4C 2S7

Telephone: (902) 865-6360 or 865-8868

(on this road also the church building and manse are located)

Brothers and sisters in Lower Sackville (and the children, see the picture, are of course included), also from this place we all welcome you. May the Lord Jesus Christ, who gathers His Church in all times and all over the world, bless you and us together, and keep us united till once we may stand in perfection before the throne of God and the Lamb.

D. DEJONG

P.S. For more information on the history and background of this church, see an article by Rev. W. Huizinga in *Clarion*, Vol. 35, No. 2, January 24, 1986



Children of the congregation



Church and manse (with br. Moes)



The congregation of Lower Sackville, NS (some are missing)

(Other photographs of the Church at Lower Sackville, NS will be published in a later issue.)

press and the greatest currency.

But what does it then mean to be an evangelical today? What is meant by evangelicalism? The *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* defines it as that "movement in modern Christianity, transcending denominational and confessional boundaries, that emphasizes conformity to the basic tenets of the faith and a missionary outreach of compassion and urgency. A person who identifies with it is an 'evangelical,' one who believes and proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ," (p. 379). The influential American historian Sydney E. Ahlstrom says that the noun "evangelical" "refers to those Protestants who: (1) repudiate Roman Catholic polity, liturgics, piety, and doctrine, and at least used to regard the Roman Catholic Church as the Anti-Christ; (2) insist upon verbal inerrancy of the received Biblical text, tend to interpret revelation in strict propositional terms, and question the value of historico-critical studies of Biblical religion; (3) regard the doctrine of *sola scriptura* as having very serious import for the devotional life of every Christian; (4) emphasize the experiential dimensions of being or becoming a Christian and hence tend to diminish the significance of the sacraments, a sacerdotal clergy, authoritative hierarchical structures, and doctrinal complexities; (5) understand the ethical teachings of the Bible in a precisionistic or legalistic manner and oppose utilitarian or situational approaches; (6) resist the extension of fellowship or even the name of Christian to persons and churches that do not share these convictions," (*The Evangelicals*, pp. 270-1).

Now, both of these descriptions as to what constitutes evangelicalism and what it means to be an evangelical come close to the mark. The first one, however, does speak in rather general terms and the second one tends at certain points to mix up evangelicalism and fundamentalism. As to how evangelicalism relates to being Reformed, neither one addresses that matter in a direct and thorough manner. In order to do that it would seem best to take a more historical approach. Once you know where evangelicalism is coming from, you will be better able to understand it and to distinguish it.

What has shaped it?

To begin with, we must be very clear about that fact which has been touched on already, namely, that evangelicalism is a *movement*. It does not describe a particular church or denomination. It finds its followers in numerous churches of differing historical and confessional background. Because of this it is always hard to define. If evangelicalism had adopted a creed we would be on firmer ground (cf. T. Chalmers on p. 25 of *The Evangelicals*). If it

had a particular founding father, that would also make definition easier. However, the fact that evangelicalism is a movement means that it has been influenced by many developments from the past.

Only that begs the question as to what past developments have shaped and influenced evangelicalism? Dr. C. Trimp of Kampen, the Netherlands, in a recent series of articles in the Dutch periodical *De Reformatie* identifies three such developments. He points to anabaptism, pietism, and methodism. Nevertheless, while agreeing with him I would say that to identify evangelicalism properly one has to point to at least five more developments, namely, Lutheranism, Arminianism, fundamentalism, dispensationalism, and pentecostalism. Each of these "isms" has left its imprint on evangelicalism.

Lutheranism

In what way? Well, let us look briefly at each in turn. First, there is *Lutheranism*. There is no doubt that evangelicalism as we know it today is a Protestant phenomenon. It can lawfully trace its roots back to the Great Reformation. From that period in history and from its greatest Reformer it has learned the lesson of the three "sola's": *sola scriptura*, *sola fide*, *sola gratia* (by Scripture alone, by faith alone, by grace alone). Now, in saying this I am not saying how well evangelicalism has understood these three sola's. Yet one will find in its literature a strong emphasis on Scripture as opposed to tradition, on faith as opposed to works, on grace as opposed to merit. No doubt it is because of these emphases that evangelicalism often strikes a responsive chord in us.

Anabaptism

Secondly, there is the influence of *anabaptism*. While evangelicalism may have taken over certain elements from the Reformation, it has also bathed in the waters of the radical Reformation. This movement was composed of those who were convinced that in one way or another the Reformation had not gone far enough. As proof of this they pointed most frequently at infant baptism. Here, they said, was a Roman cult that the Reformers should have rejected.

Behind this objection to infant baptism, as well as their other objections, lay

the fact that the anabaptists had a different view of the church and its members (J. Douma, *De Reformatie*). According to them, only those who had made a conscious and credible confession of faith could really belong to the church. Naturally this excluded infants. They had little or no eye for the corporate and communal aspect of the church. In addition, the anabaptists also took it ill of the Reformers that they had not insisted on the termination of all offices in the church. To them the offices of minister, elder, and deacon were simply a perpetuation of the Roman Catholic teaching and practice of hierarchy, albeit in a disguised form.

In part it is now this anabaptist influence which explains certain evangelical traits. For it cannot be denied that by and large evangelicalism stands unfavourably disposed to infant baptism, to the offices, and to the corporate aspect of the church. Many churches which view themselves as broadly-speaking "evangelical," such as the Mennonites, the Baptists, the Evangelical Free, the Alliance, stand firmly opposed to the baptism of infants. They may allow the children to be dedicated, but prior to their conversion experience they are considered to have no real standing in the church and in the eyes of God. As for the offices, many evangelical churches are either dominated and ruled by pastors or by a church board. The New Testament emphasis on teaching elders, ruling elders, and deacons has been neglected, much to their detriment.

Arminianism

Thirdly, there is the influence of *Arminianism*. In the 16th and 17th century a struggle raged among the Protestants of the Reformation which had to do with the teachings of Jacob Arminius and his followers. As you well know, Arminius and company taught a form of universal atonement, of partial depravity, of conditional election, of resistible grace, and of a possibility of a lapse from grace. This brought about a strong dissenting reaction from the Reformed. They stressed that the basic issue in all of these matters was the sovereignty of God. Was God sovereign in salvation or not? Was salvation to some extent a cooperative effort? (Shades of Pelagius and Roman Catholicism.)

Well now, this Arminian tendency of the past has also made inroads into the evangelical movement. This becomes evident especially in the area of evangelism. For ever since the days of the well-known evangelist Charles G. Finney, the concept of human responsibility has been enlaged (cf. *The Evangelicals*, p. 28). The gospel is presented as being divine in origin but as "needing human cooperation for its realization," (op. cit.). Linked to this is the idea that when it comes to salvation man

OUR COVER

Tiger Lily

Photo courtesy of
Travel Manitoba

can exercise a certain amount of free will. He has to make a choice and he has the ability to make that choice. Man is to some extent a free moral agent. It is due to this type of Arminian outlook that modern evangelicalism has its slogans like, "I found it," "Make your decision for Christ," "Let Christ into your heart," etc. On a related point it is Arminianism's universal atonement view that explains evangelicalism's appeal of "God loves you," even to unbelievers.

Pietism

Fourthly, there is the influence of *pietism* on evangelicalism. As a movement pietism arose in the 17th century as a reaction against the formalism that had crept into the churches of the Reformation. These churches had fallen into an era of excessive philosophical wrangling and of empty and contrived rhetoric. Later they would also fall prey to the influences of the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on human reason and intellect. Over against this, pietism developed as a so-called antidote. However, in the process its cure brought with it a whole new set of distortions. Over against the mind, pietism stressed the heart. Over against doctrine, it set life. Over against stale worship it opted for the conventicle. In addition, pietism also tended to perpetuate and build on the individualism of anabaptism. As well, it placed an inordinate emphasis on conversion and inquired incessantly for the time and place of one's conversion. Also, pietism was certainly not free from the dangers of emotionalism and subjectivism.

In many ways evangelicalism has drunk from the fountains of pietism. It stresses conversion in an over-riding sort of way with its question, "Have you been born again?" And if you have, then almost all further matters of Biblical doctrine fall by the wayside. Then it becomes a situation of "as long as you love the Lord it's alright." While modern evangelicalism may be developing more respect for the mind, its main appeal remains to the heart. While it may insist on a place for doctrine, that doctrine is often subordinate to the question of "how do you live?" In short, there is a lack of balance here. And that is also evident in its doctrine of the church. Evangelicalism stresses the invisible aspects of the church over the visible. The reason why it does not bother much with church matters, church unions, is because it has stressed spiritual unity at the expense of organizational unity. To say it somewhat bluntly, "As long as you and I are born again, it does not really matter all that much where we worship."

— *To be continued*

J. VISSCHER

INTERNATIONAL

NEW YORK (RNS)

Two-thirds of the people of Sweden never read the Bible and 10 percent have no Bibles, according to a survey conducted by the Institute for Religious and Sociological Studies in Sweden.

A report in the European Baptist Press Service, based in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, says that only 8 per cent of the Swedish people read the Bible regularly, compared with 12 per cent who attend worship services and 25 percent who pray. (CN)

MINNEAPOLIS (RNS)

About 200 of the American Lutheran Church's 4,900 congregations have voted against the ALC's proposed merger with two other Lutheran bodies to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Although negative votes are running higher than expected, church officials say they are confident that more than two-thirds of congregations that vote on the question will approve the merger documents.

The two-thirds approval of congregations is required to authorize the ALC to join the merger. Neither of its two partner-churches — the Lutheran Church in America and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches — requires congregations to ratify the plan. (CN)

UTRECHT, THE NETHERLANDS (RNS)

The primate of the Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands, Cardinal Adrianus Simonis, is being sued in a civil court for controversial remarks he made on the subject of homosexuality.

Discussing the Vatican's October 1986 letter on pastoral care to homosexual persons in a radio interview, Cardinal Simonis upheld the right of a Catholic to refuse renting a room to a homosexual. He said that homosexuality can be a threat to society and can influence the development of children.

These remarks provoked a storm of criticism. Protests came not only from gays, but also from Catholic and Protestant leaders. Catholic theologian Edward Schillebeeckx said he hoped the lawsuit would make Cardinal Simonis "more prudent and more modest," even in regard to what the cardinal considers to be the

doctrine of the church. Schillebeeckx said the cardinal should ask himself if a certain position is really the doctrine of the church when so many people are hurt by it.

The Rev. Henry Kouwenhoven, president of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (chairman of the synod of the synodical churches, VO) said that homosexual Christians could be very insulted by the cardinal's words. He said the church in particular should "give space where people can be themselves, can accept themselves and know that they are accepted." (CN)

Bah!

UTRECHT (ANP)

The president of the district court in Utrecht rejected the claims of the Dutch Society for the Integration of Homosexuality against Cardinal Simonis. He declared incorrect the thesis of the Society that the Roman Catholic doctrine is discriminating and may therefore no longer be propagated. According to the law, Cardinal Simonis is entitled to explain what the stand is of the Roman Catholic Church regarding homosexuality. He did not express himself unduly harshly or in a discriminatory manner. (ND)

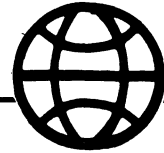
JAKARTA

The Dutch newspaper *Trouw* reports that the Indonesian churches have agreed to incorporate the five principles of Pancasila into their church orders. This decision was taken here in early December at a consultation with government officials. The churches were represented by delegates from the Indonesian Fellowship of Churches (PGI), the Council of Pentecostal Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Indonesia. The Roman Catholic Church did not agree to incorporate the Pancasila.

Pancasila was formulated in 1945 in preparation for Indonesian independence. Its five points are faith in God, humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy and social justice.

Those who approve the move by the churches cite it as an accord with Indonesian culture and believe it will promote stability in this country threatened by the domination of Islam to which a large majority of inhabitants adhere.

Opponents of the churches' action



fear that the step may lead to complete control of the churches by the state. The next step, they say, is that the state alone may interpret what Pancasila means. (RES NE)

NAIROBI

The concentration of absolute power in the hands of Heads of State is threatening Africa's political stability and economic development, a meeting of the continent's political scientists has warned here, according to an APS report. The meeting organized by the African Association of Political Science (AAPS) said the concentration of power in individuals had weakened and deprived Parliament and other legislative bodies of their supreme authority.

"The legislatures are no longer in a position to discipline or vote governments out of office on grounds of incompetence, gross inefficiency or abuse of power," they explained. Instead, they said, it was a common occurrence for presidents to dissolve parliament, detain any person without trial, and generally run the coun-

try without recourse to collective participation as enshrined in democracy.

One participant told the meeting that the dismantling of the Westminster type of constitution meant that parliaments could no longer play the role they were originally created for; even certain financial measures such as taxation could not be undertaken except upon the recommendation of the President.

The continent, the meeting noted, was drifting into authoritarianism without an effective parliamentary or representative democracy. "As one looks around Africa, the confident morning has clouded over. The door for peaceful change appears to be closed. The prevailing situation is a recipe for further political strife in the continent," the participant said.

They said that if Africa is to get out of its present predicament, the cancer of authoritarianism responsible for all the existing problems — economic and political crises — has to be removed. (RES NE)

NAIROBI

The great promise of a free and pros-

perous Africa has collapsed into an unpleasant nightmare. This was the conclusion of Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo, General Secretary of Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar (AEAM). The church, he said, was partly responsible, because it had compromised righteousness. "Increasingly, many pulpits are being used today not to preach the gospel but to politicize. Sadly, many of our churches and church leaders have become popular and rich but powerless and dead in spiritual matters." (RES NE)

LEIDEN

Johannes Brandt, who passed away in 1961, left one-and-a-half million guilders to each of three Leiden churches. They are the Netherlands Reformed (Hervormde) Church, the Reformed Church and the Christian Reformed Church (Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk). In his will he provided that the money was to be left specifically to the deacons. He was, it is said, an unobtrusive figure who wandered between the three churches to which he left his capital. It was only after his death that it became known that he owned hundreds of houses. (ND)

BARNEVELD

The forthcoming General Synod of Spakenburg will have to provide for quite a few new faculty members at the Theological College at Kampen. The Rev. M.K. Drost, lecturer in Missiology, died last year. It is proposed to make it a full-time position. Drs. J.P. Lettinga will retire at the end of the present academic year, as well as Prof. J. Kamphuis. At the end of the academic year 1987-1988, the retirement of Drs. D. Deddens will follow. (ND)

LEEWARDEN

The Foundation "Old Frisian Churches" is at a loss what to do against thieves who steal old and valuable chandeliers out of the church buildings. There is no money for alarm systems, and the inventiveness of the thieves to enter the buildings in spite of heavy locks seems to be boundless. Recently two eighteen century chandeliers were stolen from a church building in Weide. Each of them represents a value of at least Dfl. 40,000, but they are in fact, irreplaceable. (DNC)

VO



Expansion is the password for this time.

This applies not only to the size of the congregations, it also applies to the number of Churches.

In the first place we may welcome another Church: it is the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Sackville, NS. According to information from bulletins, this Church was admitted into the federation at the latest Classis Ontario North.

From a brother who was a member of that Classis I heard that it was a beautiful meeting, but since I go by written sources only, I shall quote from the bulletin of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington in which the Rev. D. DeJong wrote down a few impressions.

“This was an historic meeting, because by God’s grace we could welcome the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia, as the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at that place into our federation of churches. The three elders of this church were present, and two of them were accepted as members of classis on credential submitted by them after the admittance of this church. . . . After the admittance of this church we sang Hymn 40, the meaning of which became very real to us at that historic moment. We thank the Lord and pray that He will bless this given and found unity for all the churches involved.”

Undoubtedly the address will be mentioned in *Clarion*, so that the brothers and sisters know where to go if they are holidaying in that part of our country.

At the March Classis of Ontario South there would be a discussion about the Tri-County Church in Laurel, Md, but I have not read anything about it yet. Perhaps our readers will read something in the next issue of our magazine, when the official press release is published.

Another piece of information which gave much joy was what we read in the *Valley Church News*.

The Lynden Consistory report told us “An invitation from the Orthodox Christian Reformed Church at Burlington for our consistory to meet with theirs for discussion.”

The Rev. van Delden comments on this as follows: “Exactly what the topic of discussion will be is uncertain, but it will, no doubt, deal with matters pertaining to ecclesiastical unity. You will recall that some weeks back, they were so kind as to extend an invitation for your pastor to lead the worship service there and perform (what is meant is: “administer,” VO) the sacraments. Sadly enough, the consistory felt that such was not possible at this time, but hoped to strengthen our ecclesiastical unity first. It is through such meetings that this unity may, by the grace of God, be achieved.”

It goes without saying that we are rejoicing from the heart when such contacts are laid and pursued. Perhaps there will be more American Reformed Churches in the near future.

Here I wish to make a remark about terminology.

Sometimes one can read “Of the Canadian Reformed and American Reformed Churches.”

This is, of course, an extra kindness towards our American brothers and sisters, in order that they should not feel excluded or slighted.

It must be remarked, however, that such terminology is wrong. When there is a classis in Ontario South, this is not a classis of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, but then this is a classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches. That is the name of the federation. Since the brothers and

sisters in the United States are not numerous enough to form their own federation, they are members of the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and when we use this name, there is not the slightest intention in this to consider them as a sort of second-rank federation members. We should, however, go by the official name.

I found the same also in the subtitle of a booklet *Decently and in Good Order*, written by our brothers Van Rongen and Deddens. The subtitle reads, “The Church Order of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.”

Seeing that the first-mentioned author was, for some years, the minister of the American Reformed Church at Grand Rapids, we can understand it that he still has a very soft spot in his heart for that (and other) Church(es) south of the border. However true this may be, correct is the subtitle certainly not, although also the American Reformed Churches, of course, do have this Church Order.

Perhaps we’ll come back on this booklet some time in the future.

The theme for this medley was to be — more or less, that is — expansion.

The Fergus bulletin mentions that “This week Tuesday there will be a meeting of those involved/interested in instituting a church in the Grand Valley area. A budget will be presented and a final tally held.”

The Tuesday was, of course, not the Tuesday on which I wrote these lines. Perhaps some definitive decisions have already been taken by the consistory affected most, the one at Orangeville.

Cloverdale’s Consistory reported: “*Expansion Committee*: the brothers of this Committee present a well-prepared and researched report and are commended for their effort. After a thorough explanation and discussion, the proposals are accepted as presented. The Langley Consistory will be asked for their input and opinion on this report.”

When I had read these lines, there welled a heartfelt “Hur-ray” forth from my mouth. Seldom had I received so much information in so few words and received such a complete picture of the situation in simple, comprehensible terms.

Going all the way to Launceston in Tasmania, we learn from their bulletin that the members of the congregation living in the West Tamar area were invited to a meeting on March 11. This area is northwest of Launceston, if I am not mistaken and my map is still reliable. “On that meeting we hope to have a general discussion on our situation at the moment. Further we hope to come to a decision on what our next step should be.”

From the same bulletin I learned that the minister has seven catechism classes, divided over two days. The consistory was aware of it that his workload is somewhat heavy. Their solution? “One suitable means has been found in the setting aside of the Monday as a ‘day off.’ Rev. Jonker will be able to relax with his family on that day. The other six days are his ‘work days.’ ”

And what if he has school-age children who have to go to school on Mondays?

Now that we are in Australia with our thoughts anyway, let me mention the address of the Rev. W. Huizinga and family. It is 74 Lowanna Way, Armadale WA 6112, Australia. Telephone: 399-2343.

Another time I told you about the Kojonup meetings, the

rallies which the brothers and sisters in Western Australia have once a year, around Easter. The southerners (Albany) travel north, and the northerners (Armadale, Byford, Kelmscott) travel south to meet in Kojonup. There they have a "Kirchentag" as the Germans would call it. I would not have mentioned it again if the fact had not been stressed that this year it will be the twenty-fifth anniversary of such an assembly. Have a pleasant meeting.

As a last item from Australia I would wish to mention that they have issued a *Papua New Guinea Mission Courier* in which the Church at Albany informs the cooperating Churches about the work done there.

I get the impression that the Rev. and Mrs. Bruning will again go there for a considerable time to help the brothers and sisters with the building up of ecclesiastical life, possibly to come to institution and to the establishing of closer ties with the Australian federation.

More expansion, this time not in the form of new congregations but of new buildings and/or additions.

In Burlington West "plans are being made to construct a steeple on our church building in the near future. We have had a steeple fund for many years."

In London "our church made an offer on the property to the south of the church building which, however, was not accepted. The possibility exists that the owner may offer it to us at a higher price, but the consistory felt that with the added cost of demolition of the house and preparation of the lot for parking the final cost would be too high."

Nearby Watford had a discussion "about a church building which is for sale in Strathroy. No action will be taken. However, it might be good to think about a new church building for the future."

Perhaps as a sort of preparation for this "A baptismal font is presented to the church."

The Consistory of the Maranatha Church in Surrey appointed "four council members to find a suitable piece of property for a new manse." The brothers will have had their reasons for this, but I am wondering why not the committee of administration was charged with this task, since members of the consistory have so much to do already. The ultimate decision is always up to the consistory, so there is no danger that "unauthorized" persons will make the decisions.

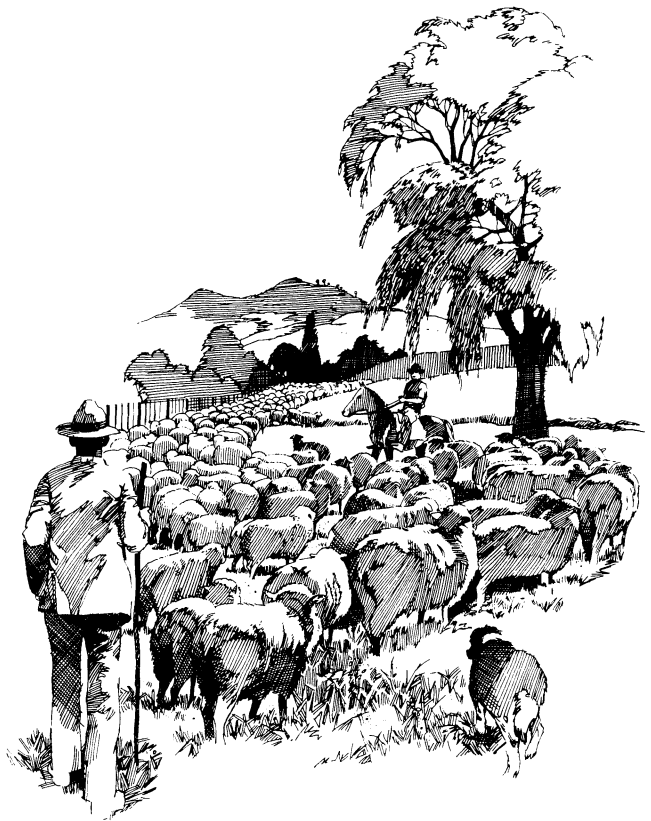
In Carman the Consistory made a courageous decision.

"The consistory having read the request of brother A. agrees with him that a difficulty exists with a segment of the congregation in the understanding of sermons in the English language. Consistory has discussed this broadly and looked at all possible avenues, detecting difficulties with possible solutions to this problem."

"The consistory came to the conclusion that the reinstating of Dutch services would not be the desirable course of action to follow, because it is to the vital interest for all members of the church to know the English language at least to the greatest possible extent. It was observed that the concentration on the Dutch language would tend to separate the congregation into two sections: young and English speaking and the somewhat older and Dutch speaking members of the Church. This would not be in the interest of the congregation. A possible gap could be created between parents and their own children. Consistory therefore urges those who experience difficulty with the understanding of the sermon to make use of the tapes that are available of the Sunday sermons or secondly to make use of the Dutch sermon-tapes as a second option."

A few cheery notes in conclusion.

On May 2nd another Mass Choir Concert is planned in Ontario, this being another benefit concert for the Handicapped. Tapes of the performance will become available later on, as was the case with the previous concert. This time there will



be even more choirs participating than the other time, and that was beautiful already.

What I do not find so beautiful is the following sentence in the announcement. "Any business (or individual) which donates \$50 or over will receive a free tape of the concert. Any donation over \$200 will also be acknowledged in the program."

Sorry, but here we go into a direction which is wrong. The \$200 donation will give someone a chance to become known as a generous giver. Marvellous, but is that what the Lord Jesus taught us? That our business people will use the possibilities there are to receive a receipt for tax-purposes, this is something which we are allowed to do and to use whenever possible. But to have the name included in the program as someone or as a company that gave a generous gift? Not only does the right hand then know what the left hand has done, but it will be rumoured far and wide: they will be "seen" by the people and then they have their reward, as our Saviour said.

We should definitely not go into this direction or promote this kind of thing. It may bring some extra money into the coffers, but it is not an action which will be blessed.

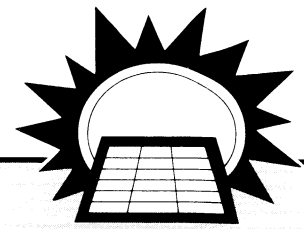
I said that we were going to have some cheerier notes, didn't I?

The Providence Consistory in Edmonton gladdened us by the following information: "The matter of having a combined church bulletin (Providence and Immanuel) was discussed. The publication committee will be asked to study this matter and report."

In the Fraser Valley a sing-song was scheduled for March 29, in order to have Psalms and Hymns available for broadcasting purposes.

And in Smithers "It is decided that the church will supply coffee for all meetings held in the church. This is for the convenience of all members.

Proficiat!



“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for He who promised is faithful.”
Hebrews 10:23

Dear brothers and sisters,

In this chapter we hear about the sacrifice of our new High Priest, Jesus Christ and the impact it has on the believers. The “old” law with its regulations was only a shadow of “the good things” we have received in Jesus, our Saviour. The fact that the annual sacrifices for sin had to be repeated constantly is proof that they could not bring salvation. They only foreshadowed that full salvation accomplished by our Lord and Saviour. He has fulfilled the law of God in our stead, so that no further offering for sin is necessary anymore. Christ’s sacrifice does not need any repetition! It was perfect and sufficient to cover all our sins. Through His death our Lord Jesus has opened for us the new and living way to God’s dwellingplace. We may with confidence approach the throne of God. For our great High Priest is sitting at the right hand of God, making intercession for us, His people.

This is the confession of our hope in which we should persevere! The writer of this letter speaks more often about “our confession” (3:1, 4:14). He does not have in mind some written documents as we have in the creeds, but he thinks of that great fact that Jesus is our High Priest at the right hand of God where He pleads our cause. That’s what we believe and confess of Jesus Christ. That is the confession we should hold fast! Otherwise we get lost. The Hebrews to which this letter is addressed were in danger to give up their faith in Christ and to fall back into Judaism. They had to suffer for Christ’s sake and those hardships and afflictions made them waver in their trust upon Christ.

The worries and cares of life often tend to draw our attention away from the hope we have in Christ Jesus. Looking at ourselves, our own imperfections and the sometimes so depressing circumstances, we so easily get discouraged. But here the Lord appeals to all believers to remain steadfast in their confes-

sion of hope. For we have a High Priest in heaven in whom we have received forgiveness of sin. We may by the grace of God look forward to a future of everlasting joy and bliss. The Lord has promised it and He will certainly do what He has promised. For He is faithful. He will finish perfectly what He for me has undertaken and He will not forsake the works of His hands.

Our birthday calendar.

We have only one birthday during the month of May.

May 21

HERMAN WEMEKAMP

109 Byphia Street

Orangeville, ON L9W 3V5

Mr. Wemekamp was born on May 21, 1938. He suffers already many years from M.S. I’m sure he will appreciate a note or card from our readers, so that he may know that you care!

Jesus is our sure defence.
Why should we then fear or waver?
All our hope and confidence
Rests on Him, the risen Saviour.
Even in our darkest hour
He will shield us with His power.

What is weak and mortal here,
Prey to illness and destruction,
Shall with glorious power appear
In the hour of resurrection.
What today is sown disgraced
In great honour shall be raised.

Hymn 51:1,4

Greetings to all of you!

MRS. J. MULDER

1225 Highway 5, RR 1

Burlington, ON L7R 3X4

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

Already in 1872 the seventeen elders of whom we spoke before decided not to be present at various ceremonies conducted by modernistic ministers.

Gradually the number of those who refused to be present when modernistic ministers examined candidates grew until none of the elders were prepared to assist by their presence with actions which were not in accordance with God's Word.

Complaints about this sent to the Consistory by parents of modernistic candidates were denied by the Consistory; the parents were admonished to take heed that they brought up their children in accordance with the promises made at baptism!

When, because of the refusal by the elders to be present at the examination, modernistic candidates could not be examined and admitted, these candidates asked for a testimony that they were of good moral conduct. It was their intention to take this testimony or attestation to another Church where they would not be refused. Once they had made profession of "faith" in that other Church, they could receive proof of this and then go back to the Amsterdam Consistory to be registered as full-fledged members.

But the Consistory refused to give the requested testimonials. It wrote back asking the applicants to inform the Consistory within eight days whether it was their intention to confess Jesus Christ as the only and all-sufficient Saviour, who was delivered for our sins and was raised up for our justification.

When none of the applicants were willing to answer this question, the Consistory replied that the requested attestations could not be given. It was the fourth of April, 1885.

To ensure that both those who requested an attestation for another Church as well as those who came in with an attestation from elsewhere adhered to the Scriptural doctrine, the Consistory drew up the following declaration to be signed by both these groups of persons.

The undersigned — who by the grace of God is permitted to believe from the heart that the doctrine which is contained in the Old and the New Testament and in the Articles of the Christian faith, and is taught in this Christian Church is the true and complete doctrine of salvation — requests the Consistory of the Netherlands Reformed Congregation in this place to give him an attestation for the Reformed Church of A., or: upon presentation of his attestation from the Reformed Church of A. to cause him to be registered in the membership book of the Church in this place.

Not accepting the Consistory's refusal to give the requested certificates, the persons involved appealed to the Classical Board.

The Classical Board, however, declared that the Consistory could not be compelled to issue these certificates, since the Regulations did not provide that they were to be issued. . . .

Appellants then addressed themselves to the Provincial Board and the Provincial Board of South Holland decided on October 26 to *order* the Consistory to issue the certificates within six weeks if there were no objections

on the ground of the applicants' moral conduct.

The Consistory decided to appeal this decision with the General Synodical Commission, but in a decision of November 24, 1885, this Commission ordered the Consistory to issue the testimonies before January 8, 1886.

The Consistory met on December 3, 1885, and refused to comply with the order.

The Temporal Possessions of the Church

Again we retrace our steps for some distance.

In 1819 King William I put the administration and management of the ecclesiastical possessions and assets into the hands of a "General College of Supervision," and this body was the practical owner and administrator of whatever assets the Netherlands Reformed Church might have locally as well as country-wide.

Only the Church of Amsterdam had, upon its request, received the free administration and management of whatever possessions and assets it had. This was done by royal decree of July 8, 1820.

Ten years earlier, in 1810, the Amsterdam Congregation had transferred the management of its possessions to the General Consistory; the General Consistory, in turn, had appointed a committee "for the management, goods, funds, and income of the congregation." The name under which this Committee was generally known was "Ecclesiastical Committee."

The conditions were, therefore, present for the Amsterdam Church to retain its temporal possessions irrespective of the course which the Netherlands Reformed Church as a whole or the Amsterdam Church in particular might take.

As a further precautionary measure the Consistory decided on April 12, 1875:

1. In case a member of the "Ecclesiastical Committee" was placed under discipline, the Committee was to decide if and — if so — in how far the discipline would affect this person's right as a Church Warden. Until such a decision was made the man remained in function.

2. The authority of free management could never be transferred to the Classical Board "doing what belonged to the Consistory."

The above decision proves that the dangers were seen by more people than just by those who were to occupy a prominent place in the further development and course of events, such as Kuyper and Rutgers. The decision was taken in 1875. This was two years before Rutgers was to come to Amsterdam and it was during the two years when Abraham Kuyper was in Switzerland for health reasons. Neither of these two, therefore, was in Amsterdam at the time.

It also shows that many in the Amsterdam Consistory foresaw conflicts with the ecclesiastical boards and wished to secure the rights of the local Church to its temporal possessions.

The above decision did not have any consequences for the Consistory and the Classical Board did not interfere in any way.

Things went differently some ten years later.

On December 15, 1885, the Consistory adopted a proposal by Dr. Rutgers to give further instructions to the Church wardens how to act in case of a conflict.

In 1875 it was left up to the Committee to determine which effect — if any — discipline would have on one's position as a Church warden. This could be dangerous, and for this reason Rutgers proposed that, in case of a conflict, the Committee was to "recognize the original Consistory which sought to keep the Congregation with the Word of God as the only legitimate Consistory."

In spite of vehement opposition by a few, this proposal was adopted with eighty members in favour (5 ministers, 42 elders, and 33 deacons) out of a total of one hundred Consistory members.

There could be no doubt that the Classical Board would be told about this decision and that the messenger service would be put into action without delay. Something was going on in the Amsterdam Consistory already, namely, the question of attestations for modernistic members, and now this! Measures must be taken!

In the morning of January 4, 1886, the eighty Consistory members who had voted in favour of the proposal were provisionally suspended from office by the Classical Board.

A very acceptable explanation has been suggested for the apparent haste and urgency with which the whole procedure was launched by the Classical Board. This explanation is that the Classical Board was aware of it that in the evening of that same day — January 4, 1886 — the Consistory was scheduled to meet in order to decide about the question of the attestations. It could be foreseen that the brothers would refuse to comply with the synodical order to issue them. Classical action was to follow, for it could not be tolerated that such a synodical order was disobeyed.

However, in that case the censure would be based on a point of *doctrine*, and this could prove very embarrassing for the gentlemen of the Classical Board. Thus the whole matter was cleverly switched from the point of confession and faithfulness to the Lord to the point of temporal possessions and the apparent eagerness on the part of the Consistory to retain control of the temporal possessions as the main issue in a conflict!

This suggested explanation is very plausible. It is completely in the line of what happens with every reformation. Seldom, if ever, does the point of doctrine constitute the basis for discipline or sentencing of God's faithful children; the attention is almost invariably drawn to the point of maintaining or rather disturbing the order, disobedience to — what consider themselves to be — lawful authorities, and so on.

However good and pure Rutgers' intentions may have been, some have deplored it that he came with the proposal at that moment and that the Consistory adopted it, because thereby the Classical Board received the opportunity to leave the embarrassing point of attestations out of the picture and to concentrate on the matter of temporal possessions, a far less difficult point to deal with. Now the Classical Board could present themselves as the champions of the right of the Church over against usurpers.

As had been the case with the suspension of the Rev. Hendrik de Cock, so the suspension of the eighty was invalid according to the rules.

Only two members of the Classical Board had signed the documents whereas these should have been signed by all members. Three members of this Board were also members of the Consistory and judged here matter they had already dealt with in the Consistory. And these are only two of the reasons why the suspensions were illegitimate and illegal.

The Classical Board also took over the rights of the Consistory and began to do what belonged to the task and rights of the Consistory. All this without the suspended brothers even having been *heard* by the Classical Board.

One of the first acts of the Board was, of course, that it annulled the decisions of the Consistory regarding the Ecclesiastical Committee as well as that concerning the attestations. Together with the non-suspended members it decided to issue these attestations.

On March 24, the candidates who numbered 234 made a boat trip to another place where they were "accepted as members." Within eight days their names were passed on to the Church at Amsterdam in order that they should be registered as full-fledged members. . . .

We cannot mention all the events which followed, and will have to let a summary suffice.

The chairman of the meeting of non-suspended office-bearers and Classical Board locked the door when the meeting was over and took the key along. This was improper: the caretaker was to do this, and he had to follow the orders of the Church wardens, not of the ministers or of the Classical Board.

The Classical Board committed a further illegal act: It appointed non-suspended office-bearers in the place of the suspended ones as Church wardens. All this while the Consistory decision of 1875 provided that the "Ecclesiastical Committee" was to judge and that a member was to function until such a decision was made.

On top of this, the chairman had steel plates affixed to the inside of the door and had a special lock installed. These measures were taken in order to keep the unjustly and illegitimately suspended office-bearers out and to prevent them from using in the service of the Lord that which had been entrusted into their care.

One of the Church wardens, however, J.W. Meyer, who also was the chairman of the Building Committee, ordered the door to be opened and did so on behalf of the president of the Church wardens, Dr. F.L. Rutgers. A smith was called and by removing one of the panels in the door, entrance was gained.

This happened in the Nieuwe Kerk.

It will come as expected news to every one who knows a little about the history of the Church of Christ that the faithful part of the Amsterdam Church lost all the temporal possessions and had to start from scratch for the upbuilding of a Church life which was according to the will of the Lord.

On July 1, 1886, the Provincial Board deposed the suspended office-bearers because of their alleged disturbing of the good order and their abuse of their ecclesiastical office. This sentence was confirmed by the General Synod (*contracta*) on September 24, 1886.

An appeal by the Consistory to the plenary General Synod was to no avail: the verdicts were confirmed on December 1, 1886. The Synod considered that appellants "persevered in the position which they had taken from the very beginning."

— To be continued

The origin of our Psalm melodies⁴

Biblical signs

In my previous article I pointed to an important study concerning Biblical music, undertaken by the French scholar Suzanne Haik Vantoura. On the cover of a record (Harmonia Mundi 989), Sylviane Falcinelli tells us that Vantoura especially scrutinized the relevant Biblical signs. "After trying out many hypotheses, deductions, and experiments, she discovered the key to that ancient notation, she revealed the significance of the musical signs and finally revived and transcribed in modern notation the music which was revealed to her following methodical deciphering and irrefutable verification, whereas the cantillation of the synagogue, varying (for the same text) from one country to another, could not claim any logical justification." Vantoura worked on it for a long time. The result of these years of labour is an historical work which has convinced musicologists as well as Hebrew scholars, and the revelation of musical treasures which have already seduced the greatest composers. "Listening to this music," Falcinelli says, "everyone will be made conscious once again that the history of the people of Israel is the cradle of our Western history . . . and of its musical language. Those musicians of long ago, travelling through various lands, absorbed their modes. These songs issuing from the foundation of the ages seem to be very contemporary. Astonishingly modern, too, is the answer found by Biblical musicians regarding the relationship between text and music. We notice first the expressive correlation between the texts and their melodic line, and then the economy of means used in this expression. This way of underlining the intentions of the text reconfirms the affiliation to Western music, for in some chants we recognize the poetic nuances (madrigalisms) of the composers of the 16th century. But between Biblical musicians and madrigalists there are numerous levels, notably Gregorian chant, of which we are in the process of discovering the middle eastern sources."

Synagogue and temple

So there is not only a close connection between the church modes of the

Genevan Psalter and the Gregorian chant, but there is also the background of this chant, found in the synagogue singing. And in turn, this synagogue singing is not to be separated from the singing in the temple. Listening to a record like HMU 989, especially in respect of Psalm singing, makes this connection clear. There are also indications that the singing in the temple of David's times was based on the so-called Egyptian pentatonic scale, on which Moses is said to have composed and sung his old 90th Psalm.

Is it not remarkable that with regard to Psalm singing one can point to a long line extending throughout the history of the church?

Psalms and Hymns

No wonder that not only musicians who are church members promoted the singing of the Psalms and praised the Genevan Psalter in respect of the melodies, but that also outsiders admired the great value of these melodies.

It is very important to know that there is a continuing line in Psalm singing in the church from days of old until today.

Therefore let us be careful not to abandon this heritage!

Sometimes there is a tendency to prefer the tunes of all kinds of hymns to the Psalm melodies. Then it is said: the tunes of the hymns are easier, they are played by ear, and especially the young people like that.

At the same time it is also said: the Psalm melodies are sometimes difficult to learn, you do not so soon get used to them, etc.

But I think that also has something to do with the relation between word and tone. In former days, when the Psalms were sung in a unitone way (although against the original tonality!) and when the rhyming version was not correct, there could indeed be a problem. But all that is improved now. It is therefore to be applauded that the Genevan melodies are more promoted than before. For instance in South Africa, there is the beautiful rhymed version of the poet Totius. Unfortunately, some Psalms are rhymed in a way in which the existing church modes cannot be sung. So the Psalter is more or less mixed up with church modes and

other melodies. But now there is the attempt to make it possible that all Psalms are to be sung on church modes.

Let us sing Psalms!

To prevent misunderstandings: I do not want to say a bad word concerning hymns, especially not concerning the 65 Hymns of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches. I only stress that the singing of Hymns should not be promoted at the cost of singing Psalms.

A couple of years ago I was in South Korea, and the people of the church were used to singing all kinds of Hymns. When I delivered some guest lectures at the Theological Seminary at Pusan, I pointed also to the Psalm melodies. Then several students asked me, "Why do we not sing Psalms on these beautiful melodies?" And right away some students tried to make a start of it.

Sometimes it is asked just the other way around in the mission fields, especially by missionaries, "Why do we have to sing the Psalms to the Genevan tunes? Let the people sing in the church in the way they like and which they are used to, for instance using the tunes of popular songs." And one of the arguments is then: actually also the Psalms were sung in reformation times to popular tunes!

But since it is clear that this appeared to be wrong, let us not argue any more in this way.

I think the people in the mission fields must have their own rhymed version, in their own language. But let us be careful not to abandon the beautiful melodies of our Psalms too soon!

I want to stress also: let us sing *Psalms* and not only one or two stanzas of a Psalm. Of course, some Psalms are too long to sing as a whole. One always points to e.g. Psalm 119 with the many stanzas. But in that case there were also already from of old indications to sing a part of the Psalm, and many times that is forgotten. But if a Psalm is not that long, let the people sing the whole Psalm. Then they will also understand the better the contents of what they are singing.

I want to point also to the possibility of *antiphonal* singing, in which two parts of the people sing on turn. That was also done from of old! A clear example of that

way of singing is Psalm 136: the burden or the chorus was sung by a part of the people, while the rest was sung by another part.

Do not say too soon: then you make a part of the congregation passive and silent. To *hear* is also a matter of being active and in your mind you are then still singing with the other part, just as you are praying with the minister, when he prays on behalf of the whole congregation.

Conclusion

We may conclude at the end of these articles that the Psalm melodies of the Genevan Psalter were of undoubtedly

high quality for congregational singing. The link of the Genevan melodies with the ancient church and via the synagogue with the Old Testament church has been established as proven fact, over against the so-called “contrafact theory” as if the Psalm melodies were only derived from street songs and “top-hits” of that time.

Thankful use of the Psalm melodies of the Genevan Psalter will mean a really ecumenical labour of love: we will be singing in communion with the saints of by-gone ages.

In this respect it is now up to us to show our gratitude to the Lord of the church of all ages.

I will end with Calvin’s words about

congregational singing in his *Institutes* (vol. III, 20): “Certainly if singing is tempered to a gravity befitting the presence of God and angels, it both gives dignity and grace to sacred actions, and has a very powerful tendency to stir up the mind to true zeal and ardent prayer. We must, however, carefully beware, lest our ears be more intent on the music than our minds on the spiritual meaning of the words.” And in the same context (32) he says: “If this moderation is used, there cannot be a doubt that this practice is most sacred and salutary.”

K. DEDDENS

“Evangelical” and “Reformed”: synonyms, antonyms or homonyms? 1

Who are we?

Do you know who you are? Do you know what you are? Do you know why you are what you are? All of these questions are ones that relate to the basic matter of identity. We have to know who we are or else we will find our personal lives filled with insecurity and confusion. The same applies in equal measure to our faith lives. We may be members of the Canadian Reformed Churches but what does that mean? What does it mean to be Reformed? What kind of images does that word evoke and what kind of content does the word have for us?

These types of questions are especially pertinent today because we live in an era in which one often meets with confusion when it comes to our identity. We know that we are not unbelievers, that we are not Muslims or Hindus, that we are not Roman Catholics or Jehovah’s Witnesses. We can see that a real gulf exists between them and us. But how do we now view ourselves over against those who, broadly-speaking, are with us in the Protestant camp? How do we regard ourselves in relation to those who are distinctly conservative in that camp? We have very little problem distancing ourselves from those of liberal Protestant persuasion, but how are we to consider ourselves in connection with those who are theologically circumspect in that they take the Bible seriously, take the need for regeneration seriously, take holy Christian living seriously? In short, how are we to view ourselves in relation to those who belong to

what is called “evangelicalism?”

There are Reformed believers who are convinced that there is very little difference between being Reformed and evangelical. It is said that except for the fact that we have some different customs and practices we are pretty much similar. Whatever difference do exist are not really a matter of content as they are a matter of emphasis or historical background. On a different score, there are also Reformed believers who are of the conviction that all evangelicals are dangerous and should be avoided like the plague. They consider evangelicals to be a threat precisely because they seem almost orthodox. “Almost-orthodoxy,” they say, “can so easily lead us astray.” Hence it is best to regard evangelicals as opposites.

Finally, there are those who insist that while evangelicals and Reformed have a lot in common, there are nevertheless some very basic differences that have to be taken into account. Our response should be, they say, neither one of gullibility nor one of animosity, but rather one of charitable discernment. If you like, you can say that the first mentioned position views the positions of evangelical and Reformed as synonyms. The second position views them as antonyms or opposites. The third views them as homonyms, a term which refers to words that may sound the same to many ears but which are different.

The word “evangelical” defined

Which response is the correct one?

To answer that it is necessary for us to take a closer look at the term “evangelical.” The actual word “evangelical” comes from a Greek noun *euangelion*, which means “good news” or “glad tidings” or “gospel.” In that sense one will find it used very often in the New Testament. As such it is a rich and beautiful Biblical word. If you take this word and consider only its basic meaning then it is ridiculous even to speak of any kind of contrast or conflict between the words “evangelical” and “Reformed.” The question “Evangelical or Reformed?” is strictly speaking a wrong one. We should be both, not either/or (cf. J. Kamphuis).

Nevertheless, the question still needs to be asked precisely because of the diverse way in which the word “evangelical” has been used throughout history and the diverse groups it has been associated with. Prior to the time of the Reformation it was used rather infrequently. But thereafter it popped up repeatedly. Erasmus, Thomas More, and others used it in a negative sense to refer to those who followed the teaching of Luther. (See *The Evangelicals*, p. 23). Luther himself did not want the term to be applied to his followers, but it soon was, with the result that in German usage today the word “evangelical” has become a synonym for Protestantism. In later centuries the word was used in England to describe the Methodists and the low Anglicans. It was even used in the Netherlands to describe a thoroughgoing liberal movement. But finally, it has been in North America that the word “evangelical” has received the broadest

Scriptural Discipline

Perspectives on teaching and learning⁴

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to Thy Word.” Psalm 119:9

There is such a thing as truly Scriptural discipline. It speaks to us from sacred history, in the discipline of the LORD over His children. That discipline is taught us also in Solomon’s proverbs. An education in the fear of the LORD includes a training in respect for the government and for the teacher, and in the first place for the parents. Such discipline is not harsh, neither is it unjust. We do not need to break our children; we may laugh with our children and enjoy life with them; we do not need to raise our children in such a way that we can be proud of them. No, discipline is not what the ancient Rabbies and Pharisees made of it, nor what was found in the harsh and cruel schools of the enlightened and liberal Greeks and Romans.

The prophets called it idolatry when Israel despised its LORD and God. Such language is rather different from today’s liberal, enlightened call for tolerance and freedom of conscience. Our children must learn that the rejection of God’s authority, the shunning of God’s discipline is the greatest sin of mankind, greater than the sin of Noah’s drunkenness; it is the sin of Jeroboam who made Israel sin.

Moral education? Certainly, but do not teach the children in this way, “Stealing? Un-Christian! You know that you should not do that. I don’t want you to be a thief. . . .”

Our children need to learn in this manner: “The LORD says: I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the house of bondage of sin — through the blood of our LORD Jesus Christ. And this God does not want His people to steal. He said: I am the LORD, your God, you shall not steal. And if you have been disobedient? Go to Him, go to our LORD Jesus Christ. My boy, my girl, I’ll help, I’ll pray with you. . . . We all are people who constantly do those things which we should not.

If there is hardening of the heart, if there is repeated sin, then we do not need to threaten with this or that — often without too much success. We can hold before the unrepentant sinner the Scriptural demand: Repent, because God’s wrath is over you, and therefore I must punish you. Let’s not speak lightly of our mandate to discipline our children.

There are the many other dimensions of our lives, all of which are under God’s law. We read of the social laws which God gave to Israel. Those laws

were not cancelled, they were fulfilled. They do show us, even today, what it means to be a holy and peculiar people.

There is our body and its needs, matters of growth and food, of sex and procreation. The LORD gives us our daily food; the LORD makes us grow. The LORD is the God of love and sex; He gives parents their children. All greed, drunkenness, carousing, all filth causes His anger to rise.

The LORD instructed His people to be clean. Before the LORD was able to meet with the Israelites at Mount Sinai they all had to wash their clothes. If your father, if your mother cares about your appearance and finds it terrible when you look sloppy and unkempt, would not also the LORD care? If your father and mother are ashamed when you have done something that is dirty and wrong, would you not be ashamed before the LORD? Our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit: we are on holy ground in all that we do!

Sinful people do not need to be desperate people. God makes us clean and wise. Sin makes us so often ugly and unwise. Children have to fight against their own sins; father sometimes becomes temperamental and unreasonable. Remember, the LORD does not condone our weaknesses and sin. We learn to see ourselves for what we are: miserable sinners who cannot, who can never get out of our misery on our own.

See, then another hallelujah can break forth: I thank God in Christ Jesus who redeemed me from all my sins. . . . Sinful parents can sing this together with their sinful children; sinful teachers can sing this together with their sinful students: they all are bought by Christ’s precious blood.

Scriptural discipline is a response to God’s discipline: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov. 1:7).

One day the world shall stand amazed that those old-fashioned and traditional Christian families and those poor and insignificant schools with the Bible have contributed most to the education of mankind; on the Day of the LORD it shall become clear that the foolishness of God has been wiser than the wisdom of the most famous and learned secular educators.

It is possible that a school-without-the-Bible provides excellent lessons in (e.g.) science, lessons which are well-planned, well-organized, well-executed. It is possible

that a Christian teacher learns a great deal from such a secular educator about curriculum development and classroom management. Yet education and instruction without the Bible misses its target because God does not receive the glory which He deserves, and the Christian is tempted to become a worshipper of nature.

Discipline is necessary at a Christian school and in a Christian home also to teach us our limitations, and to show us our dependence. Us, that is parents and children, teachers and students. Christian teachers must be well-trained in their work. They must know how to build a Biblical curriculum; they must be able to discern between the things of God and those of Satan. They must be well-disciplined scholars of God’s Word and work. At a Christian school you cannot “get away with things:” we all are working in our Father’s creation!

Therefore, a Christian school needs a well designed curriculum, and careful lesson planning with sound classroom management. Therefore a Christian home needs to be well managed by mother and well ruled by father. But above all, such a school and such a family need praying parents and praying teachers. Neither teachers nor parents are infallible; neither parents nor teachers are perfect and free of temptation. And the devil is so cunning. . . .

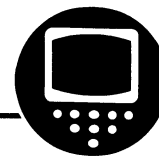
When we recognize that, together with our children or together with our students, we stand before the throne of the Lamb, then we will be enabled to worship our LORD God in growing perfection — HE will make our works perfect! Today we prepare for that day — yet hidden in God’s future — by placing the whole of our lives — and that of our children — under the discipline and nurture of God’s Word. “If God is for us, who is against us?” (Romans 8:31).

Many educators have written wise words about the education of children; many theologians have constructed imposing theories. But what is man’s word compared to that glorious, prophetic Word of the LORD, of which we may tell the next generation?

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the WORD of the LORD shall never disappoint.

T.M.P. VANDERVEN

Based on A. Janse: *Het Eigen Karakter der Christelijke School*. Hoofdstuk II: De Bijbel op School, pp.44-48. J.H. Kok, Kampen, 1935.



Classis Ontario North of March 12, 1987

1. On behalf of the convening Church of Burlington-West, elder T. De Gelder asks the delegates to sing Hymn 2:1,4, reads Revelation 1:9-20 and leads in prayer. He explains that Rev. J. Mulder cannot be present because of illness. He welcomes the delegates and mentions that the brothers from the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church in Lower Sackville, NS, are on their way. He mentions the passing away of candidate Garnet Peet and wishes the Lord's comfort to sister Peet and the Church at Ottawa. He also welcomes the deputies of Regional Synod, Rev. R. Aasman and Rev. C. Bosch.

2. The delegates of Burlington-South check the credentials and report that all churches are duly represented. Burlington-East, Burlington-West, and Orangeville have sent an alternate elder delegate. The Churches of Burlington-South and Ottawa both have an instruction; the Church of Orangeville has two instructions.

3. Classis is constituted. Chairman: Rev. J. De Jong, clerk: Rev. D. DeJong, and assessor: Rev. M. Werkman.

4. The chairman thanks the convening church for opening Classis. He also welcomes the three brothers from Lower Sackville, NS, he mentions thankfully the improvement in sister M. Werkman's condition, and expresses the sympathy of Classis to the Church at Ottawa, with the hope that they may receive a minister again.

5. Classis adopts the agenda, after adding a letter of brother H.J. Endeman of Orangeville under correspondence received.

6. The financial report from the classical treasurer, covering 1986 and the assessment for 1987 (\$4.50 per communicant member) are thankfully received.

7. Classis reads and discusses the report from the Committee re the request of the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church of Lower Sackville, NS, to be received into our federation of churches.

8. Classis adjourns for lunch and is reopened, after which roll call is held. All members are present.

9. Classis continues the discussion on the request of the C.O.R.C. in Lower Sackville. Classis unanimously decides (with the concurring advice of the deputies of Regional Synod):

1. That the Covenant Orthodox Reformed

Church of Sackville, Nova Scotia, be joyfully received into the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches at the Classis of March 12, 1987.

2. That the current office-bearers who were elected and ordained for life, be permitted to continue to serve for life. All future office-bearers will be elected in accordance with the Church Order of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

3. That the presently serving elders be permitted to continue the practice of original exhortations in the absence of a minister and/or the unavailability of pulpit supply. These elders will not administer the sacraments.

4. That a period of transition to change from the OPC Trinity Hymnal to the *Book of Praise* be set at two years.

10. The chairman welcomes the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church into our federation of churches and refers with thankfulness to the Scripture passage read, as well as to the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ in John 17:11. He welcomes the brothers and expresses the hope that they will be a hand and a foot to the federation. Classis sings Hymn 40:1 and 5. Classis decides that a letter will be sent to all the churches in the federation, informing them of the admission of the Church in Lower Sackville into our federation.

11. Classis adjourns. The members of Classis personally congratulate and welcome the three brothers from Lower Sackville.

12. After reopening, Classis examines the credentials of the delegates of Lower Sackville. The elders R. Oederkirk and F. Stefani are duly delegated, with elder H.J. Moes as alternate.

13. Elder F. Stefani addresses Classis and expresses great gratitude to the Lord for this historic moment. The elders R. Oederkirk and F. Stefani take their place as the delegates from Lower Sackville.

14. The Church at Brampton reports on the inspection of the classical archives.

15. A report on Church Visitation to the Church at Guelph is thankfully received.

16. Question Period according to Art. 44 C.O. is held.

17. Instructions.

a. The Church at Orangeville brings to the attention of Classis that no church visitation was made for about three years. Orangeville also asks the churches to be diligent in sending their contributions for the Rev. C. Olij Fund.

b. The Churches at Ottawa and Low-

er Sackville request pulpit supply. The following schedule is adopted:

Lower Sackville: June: Rev. D. DeJong; Sept.: Rev. M. Werkman; Dec.: Rev. G. Nederveen; March ('88): Rev. J. Mulder. Ottawa: April 5: Rev. G. Nederveen; May 17: Rev. P.G. Feenstra; June 7: Rev. J. De Jong; June 28: Rev. J. Mulder; July 19: Rev. R.N. Gleason; July 26: Rev. D. DeJong; Aug. 30: Rev. C.I. Stam; Sept. 20: Rev. M. Werkman; Oct. 4: Rev. G. Nederveen; Oct. 25: Rev. R.N. Gleason.

c. The Church at Lower Sackville requests some financial assistance. Seeing that the admission of the Covenant Church brings with it certain financial obligations which this church cannot yet bear, Classis decides:

1. To allot from the Fund for Needy Churches up to an amount of \$750.00 for 1987, for travel expenses of the ministers.

2. To exempt the Church at Lower Sackville at this time from contributing to the Olij Fund. It is not in the province of Classis to deal with the other "exemptions." (Foreign Mission and Mission-Aid).

3. The Church at Lower Sackville will be assessed as the other churches for Classis costs.

18. Correspondence received: a letter of br. H.J. Endeman of Orangeville is declared inadmissible on the ground of Art. 30 C.O.

19. Appointments: next Classis is scheduled for June 11, 1987, at 9:00 a.m. Convening church: Fergus. Suggested officers: chairman: Rev. P.G. Feenstra, clerk: Rev. J. De Jong, assessor: Rev. D. DeJong. Rev. D. DeJong and Rev. P.G. Feenstra are appointed as the church visitors for the Church at Lower Sackville. At the request of the Church at Lower Sackville, Rev. D. DeJong is appointed as their counsellor.

20. Question period.

21. Censure according to Art. 44 C.O.

22. The Acts of Classis are read and adopted.

23. The Press Release is read and approved.

24. The chairman speaks a few fitting words of appreciation to the members of Classis and for the ladies who served us. He wishes all the members the Lord's blessings on their local congregations. Classis sings Hymn 40:2 after which the chairman leads in thanksgiving, and adjourns Classis.

For the Classis,
M. WERKMAN, assessor

Search & Find

- by Mrs. J. Roza



THIS MONTHS CATEGORY:

Occupations

One of the most important necessities that we all need in life is food. That is why the talents of the **FARMER** are one of the most needed in the world. A modern day farmer must be a machine operator, mechanic, veterinarian, and businessman all rolled into one.

In Biblical times farming methods were more primitive. Jesus also used farming as a theme in some of His parables. Do you remember the name of this young Biblical woman who picked up the leftover grain in the fields of Boaz and she soon after became his wife? She was also the great grandmother of David.



TEXT: II Corinthians 9:6, *The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*